

A serial data cursor for extracting content from an analog waveform representing a serial digital data stream has a horizontal length equal to a "word-time" as determined by parameters of a protocol for the serial digital data stream and a clock recovered from the serial digital data stream. The serial data cursor delimits a portion of the analog waveform, which is then decoded into human readable form, such as binary, octal, hexadecimal, alpha-numeric or the like. A trigger may be generated from a specific parameter of the protocol, such as a frame start, so that the serial data cursor initially highlights a first data word of a frame of the serial digital data stream. Alternatively the decoded portion of the analog waveform may be compared to the specific parameter, and the serial data cursor incremented by a "bit-time" until the specific parameter is found in the serial digital data stream.